

ROADS, TRAILS, MOTOR VEHICLES and WILDLIFE

What You Need to Know

Motor vehicles play an important role in hunting. They have always been used to travel from home to the hunting area. As vehicles were improved hunters took them farther and farther from the main road. At the same time more and more roads were built, particularly in Idaho's forests. With the advent of trail motorcycles and ATVs, hunters left the roads and took to trails. ATVs have enabled hunters to travel cross country, an activity that has become increasingly common during the hunting season.

Motor vehicles, from pickups and SUVs to motorcycles and ATVs, have changed hunting and some of those changes have created difficult challenges for hunters, land managers and wildlife biologists. Consider the following:

- Roads that are open to motor vehicles increase access into big game habitat and as a result the number of hunters increases. Generally, the number of hunters in an area is directly related to the number of roads.
- The combination of more hunters and increased mobility of hunters in roaded areas increases the vulnerability of deer and elk to harvest. Deer and elk living in a heavily roaded area are more likely to be killed during the hunting season and for that reason these areas have fewer old bulls or bucks. It also means that hunting seasons have to be shorter to prevent over harvest.
- Research shows that slow moving vehicles on primitive roads and trails are more disturbing to elk than fast moving vehicles on highways. Slow moving vehicles traveling cross country have the same effect. Deer and elk often flee from the sound of motor vehicles and may leave the area.
- The number of ATVs in Idaho has increased five-fold since 1994; in 2005 over 90,000 off highway vehicles were registered in the state. Most people who own ATVs use them for hunting.
- Conflict is occurring where ATVs have increased access into areas that were lightly used in the past. Conflicts also occur because some people specifically select areas that are closed to motor vehicles for hunting and are upset when these rules are violated by others.
- Cross-country travel with motor vehicles can create a network of new travelways that cause erosion, spread noxious weeds, and damage fish and wildlife habitats. Much of this cross country travel occurs during the hunting season.

To reduce these impacts, Idaho's land and wildlife managers ask all hunters using motorized vehicles to stay on roads and trails and use designated routes where they're established. Do not travel cross country with a motor vehicle.

Look for Designated Routes on Public Lands

- The U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have already established designated routes in several areas of Idaho. Please pay attention to the travel system in the areas you hunt.

For more information about travel management on Idaho's Federal lands, contact these offices or websites:

U.S. Forest Service 208-373-4007
website: www.fs.fed.us

Bureau of Land Management 208-373-4007
website: www.id.blm.gov

Access management helps both wildlife and hunters. Your support is needed. Please observe established road closures and access restrictions. Road closure violations can be reported by calling 1-800-632-5999, or any IDFG, BLM, or USFS office.

Idaho's Motorized Vehicle Restriction Rule

SEE PAGE 14 FOR COMPLETE RULE.

Wisely managing roads, trails and motor vehicles will:

- Yield more old bucks and bulls.
- Permit more hunting opportunity.
- Allow longer seasons.
- Decrease erosion.
- Reduce conflicts.
- Reduce damage to habitat and the spread of noxious weeds.

Best of all, **IT WILL MAKE HUNTING BETTER!**

Remember!

- **Observe road closures and access restrictions.**
- **Say no to cross-country travel.**
- **Stay on roads and trails open to motorized travel.**
- **Use designated routes where they're established.**
- **Follow Idaho's *Motorized Vehicle Restriction Rule*.**

MOTORIZED VEHICLE RESTRICTION RULE

The Fish and Game Commission has implemented restrictions for motor vehicle use while hunting to address many sportsmen's concerns about off-road travel. The restricted units are: 29, 30, 30A, 32, 32A, 36A, 37, 37A, 45, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 56, 58, 59, 59A, 66, 69, 70, 72 (late season), 73, 75, 77, and 78.

The rule is found at IDAPA 13.01.08.411. The rule reads:

411. Motorized Vehicle Use Restrictions.

The use of motorized vehicles by hunters as an aid to hunting big game is restricted in certain areas. This use restriction is in addition to all federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances and orders; including, but not limited to, any motorized vehicle licensing, registration, and permitting requirements and traffic laws. Hunters must comply with all motorized vehicle limits or prohibitions instituted by the landowner or land manager. Also, this use restriction rule is not an exception from, and is in addition to, the statutory prohibition against hunting from or by the use of any motorized vehicle set forth in Idaho Code Section 36-1101(b)(1).

01. Use Restriction. In designated areas and hunts, hunters may only use motorized vehicles on established roadways which are open to motorized traffic and capable of being traveled by full-sized automobiles. Any other use by hunters is prohibited. All off-road use by hunters is prohibited.

02. Exceptions. This use restriction rule shall not apply to the following permissible motorized vehicle uses:

- a. Holders of a valid Handicapped Persons Motor Vehicle Hunting Permit may use a motorized vehicle as allowed by the land owner or manager.
- b. Hunters may use a motorized vehicle to retrieve downed game if such travel is allowed by the land owner or manager.

- c. Hunters may use a motorized vehicle to pack camping equipment in or out if such travel is allowed by the land owner or manager; however, hunters shall not hunt while packing camping equipment.
- d. Private landowners, their authorized agents and persons with written landowner permission may use a motorized vehicle on their private land; however, they may not hunt from or by the use of any motorized vehicle as prohibited by Idaho Code Section 36-1101(b)(1).

03. Restricted Areas and Hunts. This motorized vehicle use restriction shall apply to identified areas and hunts in all Big Game Management Units. The hunts and areas with a motorized vehicle use restriction are identified in the Commission's Big Game Season Proclamation, which is published in a brochure available at department offices and license vendors.

04. Defined Terms.

- a. A full-sized automobile shall be defined as any motorized vehicle with a gross weight in excess of one thousand five hundred (1,500) pounds.
- b. An established roadway shall be defined as any road that is established, built, maintained, approved or designated by any governmental entity or private landowner for the purpose of travel by full-sized automobiles. An established roadway shows evidence of repeated use by full-sized automobiles, and may include a traveled way of natural earth with depressed wheel tracks and little or no vegetation in the wheel tracks.
- c. A hunter shall be defined as a person engaged in the activity of hunting as defined in Idaho Code Section 36-202(j).

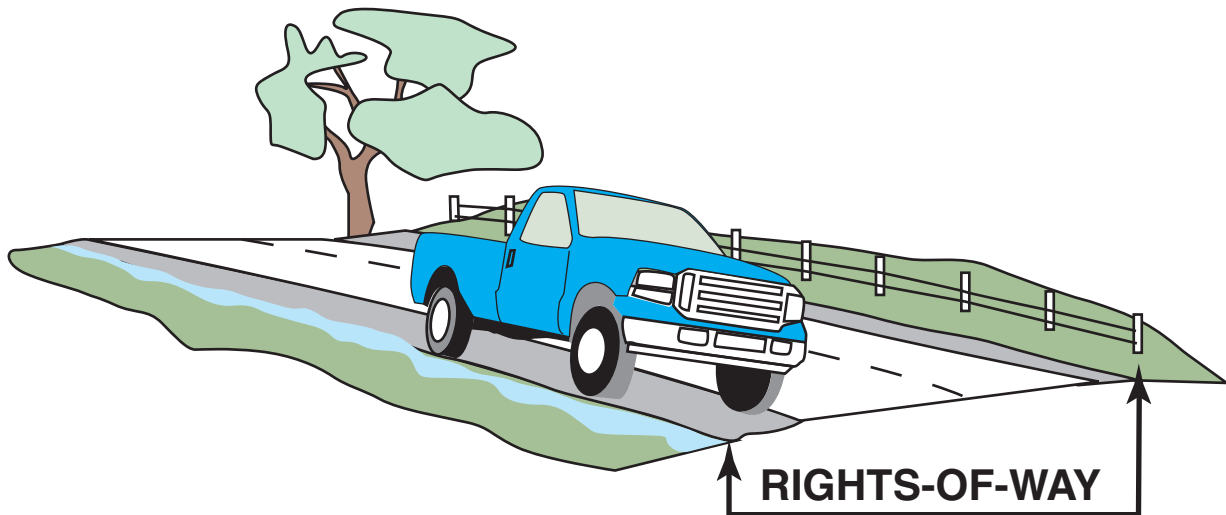
THE BUCK STOPS HERE!

As you hunt, please "use" but don't "abuse."
Hunting on Idaho's rangelands is a privilege never
to be neglected or ignored.

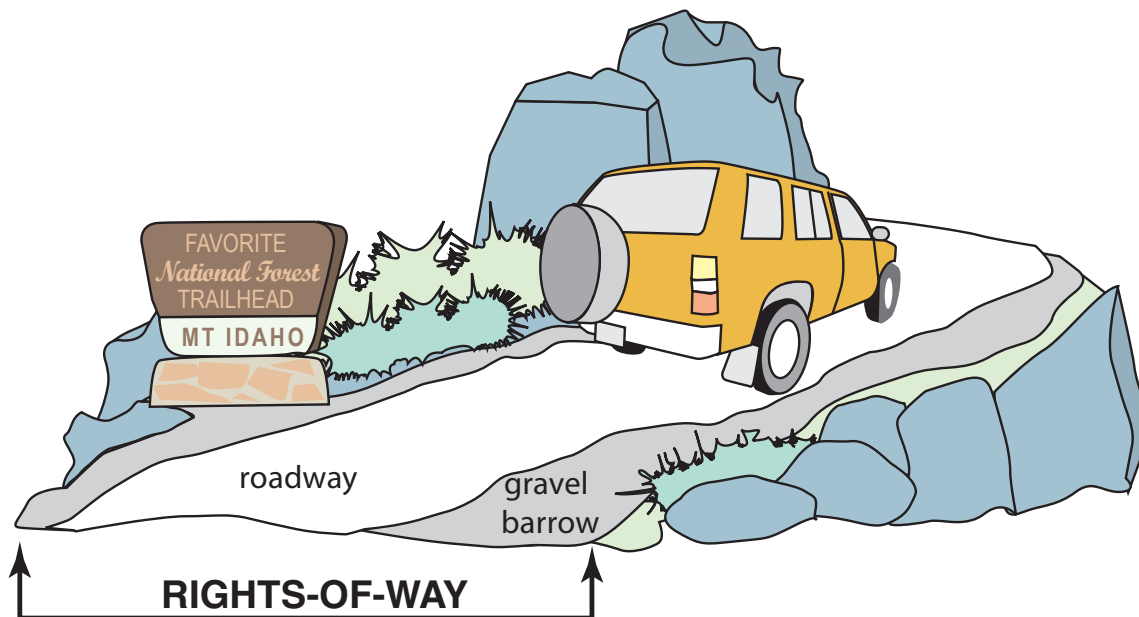
If you open a gate, please close it; keep vehicles
on existing roads and trails; and obey all posted signs.



HIGHWAY RIGHTS-OF-WAY



Highway rights-of-way: the entire width between the boundary lines of every highway publicly maintained when any part is open to the use of the public for vehicular travel, with jurisdiction extending to the adjacent property line, including sidewalks, shoulders, berms and rights-of-way not intended for motorized traffic. No person shall shoot from a public highway or discharge any firearm from or across a public highway.



Special Vehicle Restrictions

State and federal agencies and private landowners have established road closures in key big game areas to protect deer and elk populations. Please check with regional IDFG, Forest Service, or Bureau of Land Management offices for information regarding vehicle restrictions on roads, trails, and unroaded areas.